GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2595
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2001
EXPENSES ON INDIAN MISSIONS
ARUN KUMAR

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether a lot of time and money has been wasted because of property not being purchased when it was time to buy it and heavy amount is being spent on rentals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether massive rent bills from abroad will eat into the Ministry`s increased budget allocation;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the steps taken to bring down expenses on foreign missions which have shot up considerably?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a)&(b). No, Sir. The Ministry has given utmost importance to acquire its own properties for Indian Missions and Posts abroad, especially in countries where the expenditure on rentals is heavy. It has made earnest efforts to decrease expenditure by focusing on acquisition of properties within the provisions of its approved budget. Purchase of properties by the Ministry for its Missions and Posts abroad is dependent on various local factors and circumstances. In some stations it is not economically viable to acquire and develop our own properties.

(c)&(d). The Ministry is constantly making efforts to ensure that the rental liabilities are kept under check and minimized, so that Ministry`s budget allocations for other programmes are not affected. The Ministry is fully conscious of this and adheres to the various guidelines on austerity and budgetary constraints. It advises Missions and Posts abroad for strict compliance and implementation of these measures.

(e) Recently, the Ministry has initiated various steps to bring down expenses in Missions/Posts abroad for example, by purchase/construction of properties with a view to reducing rental liabilities, and also in communications sector, by using e-mail and internet in place of telex & telefax.